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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ROME 001594

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DEPT FOR PMAT. PLEASE PASS TO NSC:KVOLKER, JOINT  
STAFF:SYIKE, OSD/POLICY, USEUCOM, USSTRATCOM, USPACOM,  
USTRANSCOM, USCENCOM, USCOCOM, USSOUTHCOM, USAID

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SUBJECT: TFI201: ITALIAN PARLIAMENT TO VOTE ON IRAQ PHASE

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PAGE 02 ROME 01594 01 OF 02 141753Z  
IV CONTRIBUTIONS

REF: A. ROME 1569  
[B](#). ROME 1577  
[C](#). STATE 93769

CLASSIFIED BY: DEPUTY CHIEF OF MISSION EMIL SKODON FOR REASONS 1.5(B)(D)  
)

[1](#). (C) SUMMARY. THE ITALIAN PARLIAMENT WILL DEBATE AND VOTE ON ITALY'S CONTRIBUTIONS OF MILITARY AND CIVIL ASSETS TO IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION ON APRIL 15. WE HAVE URGED THE GOI TO SEEK PARLIAMENT'S APPROVAL FOR THE BROADEST AND MOST FLEXIBLE ITALIAN PARTICIPATION POSSIBLE SO THAT CONTRIBUTIONS CAN BE TAILORED TO MEET THE COALITION'S EVOLVING NEEDS. WHILE OUR PRIMARY FOCUS HAS BEEN ON THE URGENT NEED FOR A FIELD HOSPITAL (REFTEL C), WE CONTINUE TO EMPHASIZE THE IMPORTANT ROLE ITALY COULD PLAY BY PROVIDING CARABINIERI, MINESWEEPERS, AND MILITARY PERSONNEL FOR POSSIBLE PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS. END SUMMARY.

[2](#). (C) PRIME MINISTER BERLUSCONI HAS DECIDED TO BRING THE ISSUE OF GOI PARTICIPATION IN IRAQ PHASE IV TO THE PARLIAMENT MUCH EARLIER THAN MOST OBSERVERS EXPECTED. AT GOI REQUEST, PARLIAMENT WILL CONSIDER THE ISSUE ON APRIL 15. EXACTLY WHAT THE GOI PLANS TO PUT BEFORE THE PARLIAMENT HAS NOT BEEN DECIDED, ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS, AND MAY NOT BE FINALIZED UNTIL AFTER A CENTER-RIGHT GROUP LEADERS' MEETING THIS EVENING. WE KNOW OF AT LEAST TWO ASSISTANCE PACKAGES, ONE PREPARED BY THE ITALIAN GENERAL DEFENSE STAFF (IDGS) PROPOSING MILITARY CONTRIBUTIONS AND ONE PREPARED BY THE  
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PAGE 03 ROME 01594 01 OF 02 141753Z  
INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE HEADED BY THE MFA (REFTELS A, B). THE ITALIAN INTERAGENCY PROCESS IS IN FULL SWING TO COORDINATE WHAT IS ON THE TABLE, AND MAY STILL BE COORDINATING RIGHT UP UNTIL FOREIGN MINISTER FRATTINI MAKES HIS PARLIAMENTARY APPEARANCE TOMORROW.

[3](#). (C) FOLLOWING UP ON APRIL 11 DISCUSSIONS REGARDING A FIELD HOSPITAL (REFTEL C), MISSION CONSULTED WITH OFFICIALS FROM THE MFA, MOD AND PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE ON WHAT, WHEN AND HOW ITALY PLANS TO PARTICIPATE IN IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION. THE PARLIAMENT IS SCHEDULED TO DEBATE AND VOTE ON ITALY'S CONTRIBUTIONS ON APRIL 15; EXACTLY WHAT THE VOTE WILL BE ON IS STILL BEING HASHED OUT AND MAY NOT BE FINALIZED UNTIL TOMORROW, ACCORDING TO OUR CONTACTS. WE ENCOURAGED THE GOI TO SEEK A BROAD ENOUGH PARLIAMENTARY AUTHORIZATION TO COVER EVOLVING COALITION NEEDS WITHOUT FURTHER PARLIAMENTARY ACTION, AND REITERATED THAT, IN ADDITION TO FIELD HOSPITALS, THE COALITION ALSO COULD USE CARABINIERI FOR SHORT-TERM POLICING AND MILITARY SUPPORT FOR LONGER-TERM PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS. MINISTER ANTONIO BADINI, MFA DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR MID EAST AFFAIRS AND COORDINATOR OF THE GOI'S INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE ON IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION, TOLD POLMIN COUNSELOR ON APRIL 14 THAT FM FRATTINI PLANS TO ASK PARLIAMENT FOR A GENERAL MANDATE TO PARTICIPATE IN PHASE IV EFFORTS. INITIAL CONTRIBUTIONS WOULD INCLUDE MEDICAL SUPPORT AS WELL AS SENDING SPECIALISTS IN A VARIETY OF FIELDS (WATER, SANITATION, BANKING, ETC.). POLMIN COUNSELOR EMPHASIZED AGAIN THAT A GENERAL MANDATE ALLOWING MAXIMUM FLEXIBILITY TO RESPOND TO THE RAPIDLY UNFOLDING SITUATION IN IRAQ WOULD BE MOST USEFUL.

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PAGE 04 ROME 01594 01 OF 02 141753Z  
[4](#). (C) VCHOD GENERAL CAMPORINI TOLD THE DATT ON APRIL 14 THAT THE VOTE WOULD BE FOCUSED ON THE USE OF ITALIAN MILITARY FORCES IN PHASE IV. HE ALSO INDICATED THAT THE DEBATE WOULD EMPOWER ITALY'S CENTCOM LNO SO THAT HE CAN ENGAGE MORE DIRECTLY IN COORDINATING ITALY'S PARTICIPATION IN IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION. WHATEVER CONTRIBUTION ITALY MAKES, CAMPORINI SAID THE GOI WANTS IT TO BE A UNITARY NATIONAL CONTINGENT UNDER ITALIAN COMMAND (SUBORDINATED TO CENTCOM COMMAND) RATHER THAN SMALLER, INDIVIDUAL ITALIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO TEAMS SPREAD IRAQ-WIDE. IN PART, THIS IS DUE TO THE LIMITED MILITARY PERSONNEL ITALY CAN SEND TO PROTECT CIVILIAN ASSISTANCE TEAMS. IN AN APRIL 14 DISCUSSION WITH POLMIL

COUNSELOR, DEFMIN MARTINO'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISOR CONFIRMED THAT THE PACKAGE THAT PARLIAMENT WILL REVIEW ON APRIL 15 WOULD BE GENERAL ENOUGH TO ALLOW THE GOI TO RESPOND TO COALITION NEEDS AS THEY TAKE SHAPE.

15. (C) BERLUSCONI'S MILITARY ADVISOR, GENERAL LEONARDO TRICARICO, AND ONE OF THE PM'S DIPLOMATIC ADVISORS, PAOLO DIONISI, TOLD POLMIN COUNSELOR ON APRIL 14 THAT THE GOI IS DOING ITS UTMOST TO COORDINATE AMONG THE VARIOUS MINISTRIES INVOLVED IN DEVELOPING A CONTRIBUTIONS PACKAGE FOR IRAQ RECONSTRUCTION. TRICARICO SAID, AS AN EXAMPLE OF HOW BUMPY

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PAGE 01 ROME 01594 02 OF 02 141753Z  
ACTION SS-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	AMAD-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	INL-00
	USNW-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EAP-00	EB-00	EUR-00
	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00	LAB-01
	VCE-00	MED-07	NEA-00	NSAE-00	PM-00	IRM-00	SSO-00
	PMB-00	DSCC-00	PRM-00	DRL-01	NFAT-00	SAS-00	SWCI-00

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O 141753Z APR 03  
FM AMEMBASSY ROME  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 9257  
INFO AMEMBASSY KUWAIT IMMEDIATE  
HQ EUCOM VAIHINGEN GE//ECJ3-CI/ECJ23-H// IMMEDIATE  
NSC WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
SECDEF WASHDC IMMEDIATE  
USCINCENT MACDILL AFB FL IMMEDIATE  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GE IMMEDIATE  
JOINT STAFF WASHDC IMMEDIATE

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CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 ROME 01594 02 OF 02 141753Z  
IV CONTRIBUTIONS

THE PROCESS IS, THAT THE PROPOSAL TO OFFER A TEAM OF 500 CIVILIANS, INCLUDING MEDICAL SPECIALISTS, ORIGINATED WITH MIN. BARTELOSI, WHO HEADS THE GOI'S CIVILIAN PROTECTION DEPARTMENT, IN RESPONSE TO AN EU REQUEST. IT WAS SUBSEQUENTLY FOLDED INTO THE MFA-LED INTERAGENCY TASK FORCE'S PROPOSAL (REFTELS A,B). POLMIN COUNSELOR STRESSED THAT THE NEED FOR A FIELD HOSPITAL OF SOME KIND IS URGENT; A GOOD HOSPITAL NEXT WEEK IS BETTER THAN A PERFECT ONE NEXT MONTH. IN A SEPARATE CONVERSATION WITH THE DATT, REAR ADMIRAL DEPOLO, CHIEF OF STAFF OF ITALY'S JOINT STAFF-EQUIVALENT, CONFESSED THAT MILITARY/MILITARY FIELD HOSPITALS ARE NOT ITALY'S STRONG SUIT; THE IDGS HAS BEEN RELUCTANT TO OFFER A MILITARY FIELD HOSPITAL BECAUSE WHAT IS AVAILABLE BARELY MEETS NATO STANDARDS.

16. (C) THE BRITISH EMBASSY INFORMED US THAT PRIME MINISTER BLAIR CALLED BERLUSCONI DURING THE WEEKEND TO EMPHASIZE THE COALITION'S PRIORITIES OF MEDICAL SUPPORT FOR CIVILIANS AND CARABINIERI OR OTHER POLICE-TYPE ASSISTANCE.

17. (C) COMMENT: WE EXPECT BERLUSCONI WILL HAVE LITTLE TROUBLE WINNING APPROVAL FOR WHATEVER PROPOSAL IS PUT BEFORE PARLIAMENT TOMORROW. TAKING THE ISSUE TO PARLIAMENT NOW, WHEN THE HUMANITARIAN NEED IN IRAQ IS CLEARLY DISPLAYED NIGHTLY ON ITALIAN TELEVISION SCREENS, IS A DEFT MANEUVER THAT FRAMES THE CONTRIBUTION OF MILITARY ASSETS AS A HUMANITARIAN GESTURE AND THUS AVOIDS ARGUMENTS ABOUT THE CONSTITUTIONALITY OF COMMITTING ITALIAN TROOPS TO COMBAT WITHOUT A UN MANDATE. SOME LEFT OPPOSITION PARTIES OPPOSE

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PAGE 03 ROME 01594 02 OF 02 141753Z  
ANY ITALIAN PARTICIPATION IN PHASE IV WITHOUT SUCH A MANDATE, BUT, AS USUAL, THE OPPOSITION IS UNLIKELY TO BE UNITED OR EFFECTIVE. AS FOR THE CATHOLIC CONSERVATIVE PARTIES WITHIN THE GOVERNING COALITION THAT OPPOSED A GOI CONTRIBUTION TO THE COMBAT PHASE IN IRAQ, THEY ARE UNLIKELY TO CAUSE A PROBLEM IN THE FACE OF THE OBVIOUS HUMANITARIAN NEED TO RESTORE ORDER. ASSUMING THAT WE ARE RIGHT AND THE GOI GETS THE GREEN LIGHT TO OFFER ASSETS, THAT WILL ONLY BE THE BEGINNING; THE USG (AND HMG) WILL THEN HAVE TO WORK CLOSELY WITH THE GOI TO ENSURE THAT THE RIGHT ASSETS ARE IDENTIFIED AND RAPIDLY DEPLOYED. END COMMENT.

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